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ABSTRACT

Improvements in the public schools of Tulsa, Oklahoma, are reported in this document. Part 1, an introductory statement by the Oklahoma Superintendent of Schools, reviews successes in implementing a management-team approach to decentralizing decision making and improving the effectiveness of schools. Part 2 describes programs and policies that meet selected recommendations of the final report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Programs and policies address issues related to curriculum content, standards and expectations, time allocated for learning, teaching, leadership, and fiscal support. Part 3 offers conclusions and further recommendations. Appended are the text of the Commission's report and a report concerning the development of standards of acceptable student behavior. The latter report contains a statement of the philosophical position underlying policies related to the conduct of students in school, implementation guidelines for a plan to establish better standards of behavior, a list of suggestions for implementing rules, a list of classroom rules, a personal evaluation form designed to help children become better students, and a handout for parents intended to promote high expectations for children's instruction. (RH)

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TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

An Open Letter to the People of Tulsa

PS 014063

Where We Are and Where We're Going

by Dr. Larry L. Zenke, Superintendent

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Schools of Progress

An Open Letter to the People of Tulsa

SCHOOLS OF PROGRESS:
WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

by

Larry L. Zenke

Superintendent

Tulsa Public Schools

Tulsa, Oklahoma

June 1983

PS 014063

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I - INTRODUCTION
page one

Part II - RESPONSE
TO COMMISSION REPORT
page 6

PART III - CONCLUSION
AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS
page 19

ADDENDUM I - STANDARDS
OF ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

ADDENDUM II - COMMISSION REPORT
A NATION AT RISK

An Open Letter to the People of Tulsa

SCHOOLS OF PROGRESS:
WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

PART I

Introduction

Two factors bring people together to work in unison for a common goal. One is crisis, the other is success.

Two decades ago this school district reached a peak of success. Community support for and pride in our schools were strong, and each year's successes set new records. Eventually, Tulsa, along with the rest of the nation, grew comfortable with the achievements of the schools. Then the philosophy of the late sixties and seventies, a period of great social reform, questioned such traditional values as hard work, achievement, and respect for authority. There is no question the nation's educational systems suffered.

Tulsa, luckily, suffered somewhat less than other urban school districts, principally because the conservative nature of the community gave more resistance to the questioning of these values. Perhaps because Tulsans were affected less, they became concerned earlier as to the direction public education appeared to be taking. That concern was already evident seven years ago when I became Superintendent of Tulsa Public Schools.

My first priority, therefore, was to initiate steps necessary to return this school district to the positive and fruitful direction taken for granted in earlier years, while at the same time preserving the best of the achievements initiated during the period of social reform. The first step was to decentralize decision making, a process which would give every person in this district ownership in district achievements.

In 1977, in a letter to the Tulsa Association of Secondary School Principals, I outlined the philosophy behind the management team concept and noted consensus among a number of urban superintendents that, as Dr. Donald Thomas, Superintendent of the Salt Lake City School System, said so well:

> People are no longer willing to sit passively and let the Superintendent think and decide for them. This was the old way of playing the game and there were too many losers. Decentralization of decision making protects the system from a win-lose situation. It may be our only way to gain public confidence in our schools.

We knew the transition from the authoritarian style of management to a shared decision-making style would take time. A minimum of five years was projected as necessary for implementation. Today I can say we have achieved the scenario observed by James Redmond, former superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools, in those early days of team management:

> It is heartening to come into cabinet meetings and hear the associates talking about what we are doing with our district superintendents, principals, and teachers to meet specific school and community needs. Less and less are we discussing citywide diets; more and more are we getting to the heart of what must be done in the inner city, which is different from the school which resembles a surburban community school; and what must be done in the school that covers an industrial area; and in the schools that serve fringe areas. Our administrators are accepting leadership responsibilities--and that is promising.

Dr. Redmond went on to say:

> Decentralization of decision making, as I see it, must bring about that overworked cliche--sensitivity. More and more I am trying to say the same thing in a different way. Each of us in an administrative capacity in the Chicago Public Schools must listen more, observe more, comprehend more, and understand more.

Each year since 1977, we have seen more such sensitivity developed and put to work in Tulsa Public Schools. Each year, too, we have seen greater use of our employees' talent. As I noted in that first letter.

> It is only through the releasing of the potential which exists within the many highly competent administrative personnel, and other staff members, already within this school system that this school system will excel to the heights of which it is capable.

> If there is to be then a "Grand Plan," perhaps that Grand Plan should be the releasing of the immeasurable talents, training, and experiences already existing, but in many cases untapped, within the personnel of this school system. This largely untapped, accumulated reservoir of talents, training, and experiences could represent an unstoppable force which, I feel, can lead this school system forward in a manner which will enable it to surmount any obstacles which may be encountered.

As the management team concept developed and grew in the operation of this school system, we drew on its development to solve many of the major problems of the school district. Declining enrollment and its effects, such as the need for closing school buildings, reducing staff, and eliminating staff positions were all approached through shared decision making. This process gave us the benefit of the Declining Enrollment Task Force of 1977, but it was apparent we hadn't been reaching far enough. As I stated in an address to the employees and patrons of this school district in the February 5, 1979 Accent:

> I believe that the time has arrived when further involvement on the part of other persons and groups in responding to the challenges of this school system for the 80's is not only desired, but is required if this school system, and the community which it serves, are to respond to these challenges.
>
> I believe teachers, students, parents, and the total community must be much more extensively involved in their school system in developing a better awareness of the challenges which confront us and in formulating responses to these challenges. There must be opportunities structured for such further involvement and then a willingness developed on the part of these constituent groups to get involved and give the time necessary to formulate carefully developed responses to the challenges.

This philosophy was put into practice by the establishment of our successful area and school planning council network which addresses the problems of declining enrollment and other concerns on an ongoing basis. Shared decision making, too, allowed us to develop an orderly process for reducing staff without massive layoffs, and a budget building process which reduces distrust and builds consensus among staff members. Even the critical area of our desegregation efforts was successfully approached through the expansion of our voluntary magnet school programs.

As we completed the five-year plan for implementing the decentralized decision-making process and its companion, community participation, we did not hesitate in initiating the next step toward our goal. As I stated in an address to management team members in August, 1981:

> We have come a long way in these past five years in "releasing decision-making potential through the management team approach both at the school system level and at the individual school level." But all of our efforts are for naught if these efforts do not ultimately result in improved learning opportunities for the students in the classroom which is, after all, the mission of the business of education.
>
> As we set our direction for the next five years, I feel that an appropriate heading for that mission should be "School Effectiveness." Increasingly, all of us as educators in public schools, especially in urban areas, are coming to recognize that we no longer enjoy a monopoly on educational experiences for students.
>
> As a result, although this school system has enjoyed a fine reputation, it is important (1) that we more effectively communicate to our community the excellent learning opportunites which can be found in our schools, (2) that we do a better job of marketing and selling the services which we have to offer as we enter further into the competitive arena with private schools, and (3) that we continually evaluate our programs in our schools to determine as to how they might be improved.

Initially we established five characteristics of an effective school; a sixth was added later. They include:

1 - leadership
2 - emphasis on learning
3 - orderly climate
4 - high expectations
5 - assessing progress
6 - community involvement

Under leadership, principals were charged to use both shared decision-making processes and community involvement in improving the effectiveness of their schools. Although I did not state it in so many words, my intention both at the time and in the two years since, was for every administrator, resource person and group leader to use those same principles in working for improved learning opportunities for students.

With emphasis on learning each person was challenged to keep uppermost in their priorities our principal reason for operation: that is, instruction of children. The other challenges, a physical environment conducive to learning, high expectations of everyone from the smallest student to the Superintendent of Schools, and evaluation programs that allow for both criterion- and norm-referenced testing along with opportunities for remediation, follow but with equal need for emphasis.

As I noted in that same address:

> Increasingly, I am finding that teachers, parents, students and the overall community desire a greater voice in the direction of their school system and schools. This is not only true in Tulsa, but is evident across the nation. We as school management personnel must find ways of responding to such desires if we are to truly function in the competitive marketplace of education in the urban community.

Today it would seem the rest of the nation is awakening to the same concerns we've seen in Tulsa. We have entered a period of crisis. The report recently released by the National Commission on Excellence in Education noted public support for education is the most powerful tool for creating a Learning Society. Our school system has a head start in that we already have well established the importance of gaining that public involvement and support, and our intention is to continue to pursue and develop this area. A detailed outline of other ways we have already begun to address the concerns and recommendation of the commission's milestone report follows in Part II of this report.

However, this is not to say this school district has resolved all the problems confronting public education. We have made a start. We have far to go. Implications for the future of our instructional program will conclude this report, implications for which we believe we have made a strong beginning and have established a solid base. The future for this school district is bright, indeed, as we are committed to continue to work together to bring to reality that which we are undoubtedly close to becoming--the finest school system in the nation!

PART II

Tulsa Public Schools

Response To

A Nation At Risk:

The Imperative for Educational Reform

The April report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education has created a challenge for public schools unrivaled since Sputnik was launched in 1957. Similar reports from the Twentieth Century Fund's Task Force, as well as College Board recommendations that speak to outcomes of college preparation in high school, join in leveling criticism at public education.

George Hanford writing in the April 20th issue of Education Week succinctly sums up the dilemma:

> American society certainly is sending mixed signals to education these days. It wants its young people to be able to read, write, and compute, and to do so well enough to compete successfully with the Russians, Germans, and Japanese in science and mathematics. It wants a work force that is able to handle the complex tasks that remain as automation takes over the simple ones. It wants a volunteer army able to comprehend the manuals and operate the hardware of increasingly sophisticated military equipment. But, and it is a big but, it isn't willing to foot the bill.

We too are concerned about the image of public education, and will exert every effort to improve that image with all the professional commitment at our command. However, the National Commission report deserves a response and our primary concern will be the manner in which we address the report as it relates to the public school community of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

RECOMMENDATION A: CONTENT

We recommend that State and local high school graduation requirements be strengthened and that, at a minimum, all students seeking a diploma be required to lay the foundations in the Five New Basics by taking the following curriculum during their 4 years of high school: (a) 4 years of English; (b) 3 years of mathematics; (c) 3 years of science; (d) 3 years of social studies, and (e) 1/2 year of computer science. For the college-bound, 2 years of foreign language in high school are strongly recommended in addition to those taken earlier.

Graduation requirements in Tulsa include 4 years of English, 2 years of mathematics, 2 years of science, and 3 years of social studies.

It should be pointed out many of our college-bound students take full advantage of math offerings through analytics and calculus, advanced science including advanced chemistry, biology and physics (there are 30 elective offerings in science), and all high schools offer some form of computer instruction as an elective, but not as a requirement. Computer math has been offered in the Tulsa Public Schools since 1965.

We offer 8 foreign languages in the Tulsa Public Schools: German, French, Greek, Spanish, Latin, Japanese, Chinese, and Russian. Two of our recent graduates have been accepted for a semester abroad at the University of Moscow and Peking University. The Commission report stressed the importance of starting foreign language at the elementary level. In Tulsa, we have implemented the successful Spanish Immersion project at the kindergarten level and offer French and Spanish in several other elementary schools.

RECOMMENDATION B: STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

We recommend that schools, colleges, and universities adopt more rigorous and measurable standards, and higher expectations, for academic performance and student conduct, and that 4-year colleges and universities raise their requirements for admission. This will help students do their best educationally with challenging materials in an environment that supports learning and authentic accomplishment.

The assessment programs sponsored by the Tulsa Public Schools follow:

1. Standardized tests of achievement are regularly administered in grades 2 through 6. These tests, given in the spring, assist school personnel in identifying children with special learning needs (e.g., remedial reading, remedial math, special education, gifted) and for appropriate grade placement the following year.
2. Standardized tests of achievement are regularly administered in November of the school year in grades 6 through 9 and grade 11 to assure that students are progressing appropriately and for more appropriate grade placement the following year.
3. Educational diagnostic tests are given individually to students grade K-12 by trained school psychologists, psychometrists and by specially trained resource teachers to identify and write individualized educational programs for students in need of additional special instruction.
4. A complete "readiness for school" assessment program is currently being developed for beginning kindergarten through primary grades. These tests, given both individually and in small groups, assess pupils for learning strengths and weaknesses and to provide data for the further development and refinement of appropriate curriculum. (See attachment.)

RECOMMENDATION B: STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS
(Cont.)

5. Selected testing aimed toward assessing students for career aptitude, interests and skills is developed cooperatively with the Office of Career Education.
6. General Educational Development (GED) testing is provided for out of school young adults who seek to further their education through adult education programs, alternative school arrangements and federal skills center programs. These tests are used to obtain high school graduation equivalency and to satisfy college entrance requirements.

"READINESS FOR SCHOOL" PROGRAM

School Year	
1980-81	Pilot program in one elementary magnet school. Gesell screening of five-year-old children correlated well with kindergarten teacher's judgment regarding readiness levels of kindergarten children for regular first grade work (30 children).
1981-82	Second year exploratory program in four elementary magnet schools. Gesell tests given in fall correlate well with SRA Achievement Series, Level A, given in spring and with teacher judgment regarding readiness levels of kindergarten children for regular first grade work. Sixty to 70% of the 300+ children need an additional year of readiness skills training. Special instructional materials, equipment and training are needed for "developmental" first grade youngsters.
1982-83	Third year exploratory primary school project in four elementary magnet schools and nine north and westside schools. Gesell screening tests given in fall correlate well with Metropolitan Readiness Test, Level II given in April. Sixty to 70% of kindergarten pupils need additional readiness skills training (800+ children). Pilot developmental first grade in these same buildings indicates approximately 80% of the children acquired appropriate readiness skills and are now ready for first grade work. Additional classes are needed to serve more children.

"READINESS FOR SCHOOL" PROGRAM
(Cont.)

Southside experimental programs. In one school systematic exposure to reading and math skills produced evidence that 100% of the children are ready for regular first grade work (52 children).

In another school 98% of the children show readiness skills appropriate for first grade. Half the children received total instruction in Spanish (45 children).

In this same building spring Gesell testing of children entering kindergarten in the fall of 1983 indicates that 60% of the pre-kindergarten children are already developmentally five. In other words, over half those tested are at a maturity level appropriate for kindergarten work five months before entry into kindergarten. When a child is developmentally five (as opposed to chronologically five) when he enters kindergarten, we now have evidence that given appropriate instruction he will most likely be ready for first grade work the following year.

Additional data on performance levels of children in south and eastside schools are needed.

Proposed Next Steps:

(a) Systemwide testing of kindergarten and grade 1 children in the spring of the year to gather consistent data regarding readiness skills levels of primary children.

(b) Initiation of systematic language, reading and mathematics readiness skills exposure in schools showing evidence of this need. This should be developed slowly as we have done with "developmental" first grade.

"READINESS FOR SCHOOL" PROGRAM
(Cont.)

(c) The present Division of Instruction staffing assignments of K, 1-6 be changed to a K-2 emphasis.

(d) Move third grade summer school program to end of second grade to assure mastery of reading and mathematics readiness skills in primary grades.

RECOMMENDATION C: TIME

We recommend that significantly more time be devoted to learning the New Basics. This will require more effective use of the existing school day, a longer school day, or a lengthened school year.

There were eight implementing recommendations included in the Commission report.

1. Students in high schools should be assigned far more homework than is now the case.

*All homework assigned to students should consist of practice or extension of the teaching that has gone on in the classroom. Quality, not quantity, may be the more appropriate description. Homework should be application of the teaching and learning that has taken place in the classroom. To assist students and parents with homework assignments a "homework hotline" was established this year.

2. Instruction in effective study and work skills, which are essential if school and independent time is to be used efficiently, should be introduced in the early grades and continued throughout the student's schooling.

*We agree with the recommendation for instruction in effective study and work skills. Training should also be given to parents on how to provide a home atmosphere and assistance that will benefit students in better use of time.

3. School districts and State legislatures should strongly consider 7-hour school days, as well as a 200- to 220-day school year.

*We agree with the extended day. Our recommendations include: (1) using community resources, such as Community School Programs for providing certain electives, tutoring, remediation, and gifted and talented activities; (2) emphasizing more time on task by both students and teachers through better use of time.

*Tulsa Public Schools Response

RECOMMENDATION C: TIME
(Cont.)

4. The time available for learning should be expanded through better classroom management and organization of the school day. If necessary, additional time should be found to meet the special needs of slow learners, the gifted, and others who need more instructional diversity than can be accommodated during a conventional school day or school year.

*This area is being addressed by all schools in the 6 points considered to be essential for effective schools. (Further explanation follows later in this report.)

5. The burden on teachers for maintaining discipline should be reduced through the development of firm and fair codes of student conduct that are enforced consistently, and by considering alternative classrooms, programs, and schools to meet the needs of continually disruptive students.

*This recommendation is addressed in the "Report of the Task Force to Develop Standards for Acceptable Student Behavioral Expectations Related to Academic Performance."

6. Attendance policies with clear incentives and sanctions should be used to reduce the amount of time lost through student absenteeism and tardiness.

*State compulsory attendance laws should be enforced vigorously.

7. Administrative burdens on the teacher and related intrusions into the school day should be reduced to add time for teaching and learning.

*Every school should develop a plan that reflects a sensitivity to this problem.

8. Placement and grouping of students, as well as promotion and graduation policies, should be guided by the academic progress of students and their instructional needs, rather than by rigid adherence to age.

*Tulsa Public Schools Response

RECOMMENDATION C: TIME
(Cont.)

*We agree with recommendation number 8 and advise that parents, teachers and administrators practice appropriate sensitivity to grade level competencies when making and reviewing student promotion recommendations. We will continue to research, study and evaluate possible solutions to the challenge which this recommendation presents to our current academic structure and the related expectations of our community.

*Tulsa Public Schools Response

RECOMMENDATION D: TEACHING

This recommendation consists of seven parts. Each is intended to improve the preparation of teachers or to make teaching a more rewarding and respected profession. Each of the seven stands on its own and should not be considered solely as an implementing recommendation.

1. Persons preparing to teach should be required to meet high educational standards, to demonstrate an aptitude for teaching, and to demonstrate competence in an academic discipline. Colleges and universities offering teacher preparation programs should be judged by how well their graduates meet these criteria.

*The State of Oklahoma is addressing this concern by requiring applicants for certification to pass competency tests. The percentage of applicants passing the test from each college and university has been published. Entrance level requirements for student teaching have been raised by state universities recently.

2. Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based. Salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system that includes peer review so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated.

*The Tulsa Public Schools, through the generous assistance of the legislature, have demonstrated significant progress in raising teachers' salaries during the past decade. Further gains, however, are required if Tulsa and other school systems across the state and nation are to continue to attract and retain high quality teachers. Performance of teachers is being consistently improved in the Tulsa Public Schools through a multitude of Staff Development programs and the Tulsa Teacher Effectiveness Program for Improved Teaching.

3. School boards should adopt an 11-month contract for teachers. This would ensure time for curriculum and professional development, programs for students with special needs, and a more adequate level of teacher compensation.

*Tulsa Public Schools Response

RECOMMENDATION D: TEACHING
(Cont.)

*Although an eleven-month contract for teachers would be desirable, present local, state, and federal funding limitations make the implementation of this recommendation unlikely at this time.

4. School boards, administrators, and teachers should cooperate to develop career ladders for teachers that distinguish among the beginning instructor, the experienced teacher, and the master teacher.

*Tulsa developed in 1965 an index salary schedule which provides for a career ladder within the Tulsa Public Schools from the beginning teacher through the Associate Superintendent level.

5. Substantial nonschool personnel resources should be employed to help solve the immediate problem of the shortage of mathematics and science teachers. Qualified individuals including recent graduates with mathematics and science degrees, graduate students, and industrial and retired scientists could, with appropriate preparation, immediately begin teaching in these fields. A number of our leading science centers have the capacity to begin educating and retraining teachers immediately. Other areas of critical teacher need, such as English, must also be addressed.

*Tulsa has yet to experience a shortage of mathematics and science teachers. Because of the relatively high salary schedule, as compared to the remainder of the state of Oklahoma, Tulsa is likely to encounter a shortage in these subject areas at a much later date than many of the other school systems in the state.

6. Incentives, such as grants and loans, should be made available to attract outstanding students to the teaching profession, particularly in those areas of critical shortage.

*Tulsa Public Schools would endorse this recommendation, but would recommend that selective and strict repayment rules be instituted.

7. Master teachers should be involved in designing teacher preparation programs and in supervising teachers during their probationary years.

*Master teachers should be consulted when teacher preparation programs are being designed. In Oklahoma, entry level teachers are supervised by an assigned cooperating teacher in that school.

*Tulsa Public Schools Response

RECOMMENDATION E: LEADERSHIP AND FISCAL SUPPORT

We recommend that citizens across the Nation hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms, and that citizens provide the fiscal support and stability required to bring about the reforms we propose.

Tulsa is responding to the problem of leadership and fiscal support through the process of shared governance where educators and the public are working together to provide goal setting, educating students and evaluation of the educational process. Examples of shared governance working are: Area Planning Councils, Building Planning Councils, Northside Task Force, community response to magnet schools, and open communication between executive staff, TCTA, and the public.

As shared governance develops, the professional groups and ultimately the public will be able to influence reforms in fiscal policies to provide greater support at the local and state level.

Federal government should assume its equitable share of responsibility for the needs of key groups of students as identified in this recommendation. Federal government has a key role as well as the power for taxation and policy making to assure quality education for these populations.

We endorse the Commission's position in calling "upon educators, parents, and public officials at all levels to assist in bringing about the educational reform proposed in this report. We also call upon citizens to provide the financial support necessary to accomplish these purposes. Excellence costs. But in the long run mediocrity costs far more." Money is a major key and it must come from all levels, local, state, and federal. Priorities must be set by the public and money provided to meet goals for excellence in education.

PART III

Conclusion and Further Recommendations

This school system reflects a history of proactive efforts to respond to challenges. Some examples are:

A. During the late 50's, when our student population was approximately 61,000, we served 541 handicapped pupils. With our present pupil membership of 46,951 we are serving 5,717 handicapped pupils.

B. We have established an English As a Second Language Center for youngsters of other ethnic backgrounds who are not yet bilingual.

C. We have met school desegregation requirements with a minimum of federal intervention. We are not only providing voluntary programs to address the problem of desegregation, we are also providing programs of quality.

D. This past year we adopted a School Effectiveness program that responds to many of the points contained in the Commission report. The six areas identified in the program are:

1. To strengthen administrative leadership.
2. To develop high expectations for learning among all students, parents, and staff members.
3. To create an orderly environment for learning in each school.
4. To emphasize learning, particularly of the basic skills, as the first priority in every school.

Conclusion and Further Recommendations
(Cont.)

5. To systematically monitor progress of all students toward the achievement of specified instructional objectives.
6. To encourage strong support from parents and the community.

Each school submits a plan with activities to address the six objectives. Each principal makes an oral presentation before the superintendent and key district administrators during the year relating to progress, and at the end of the year provides the appropriate director an evaluation report regarding the degree to which the objectives were achieved.

E. During the 1983-84 school year we will introduce the International Baccalaureate Diploma program at Washington High School. We hope to ultimately include this excellent program in other high schools where interested students in sufficient numbers may be identified. The rigorous program requirements are designed to meet international standards for admission to university level work. A strong English course, a foreign language, the study of man, science, mathematics, computer studies, the philosophy of learning, involvement in a social activity in the community and an extended essay based on independent research, the equivalent of an undergraduate thesis, are included in the two-year plan of study.

Conclusion and Further Recommendations
(Cont.)

F. The report speaks to the creation of a "Learning Society." It says:

> In a world of ever-accelerating competition and change in the conditions of the workplace, of ever-greater danger, and of ever-larger opportunities for those prepared to meet them, educational reform should focus on the goal of creating a Learning Society. At the heart of such a society is the commitment to a set of values and to a system of education that affords all members the opportunity to stretch their minds to full capacity, from early childhood through adulthood, learning more as the world itself changes.

Many of the states which are presently requiring minimum competency tests as a criteria for graduation are realizing that senior high school is too late for an intervention program for pupils with academic deficiencies. Our Department of Psychological Services has provided test data convincing us that we should concentrate our primary efforts on a K-2 primary block of instruction. In other words, the earlier the intervention, the less likely a pupil will experience later difficulties. The Metropolitan Readiness Test administered to kindergarten children in our Northside Priority schools indicated that over 30% of those pupils were ready for involvement in cognitive skill acquisition such as reading or math. Consequently we will not only be testing kindergarten and first grade pupils next year, we will assign instructional assistants to concentrate their efforts on the K-2 group of pupils, with any future remediation at the second, rather than the third grade.

G. The Commission spoke to the role of parents and students in assuming part of the responsibility in a renewal of commitment to excellence. We must all develop an attitude that reflects a deep respect for

Conclusion and Further Recommendations
(Cont.)

intelligence, achievement and learning. The Commission also included an admonition relative to developing an intolerance for shoddy work as being "good enough."

It is most timely that the Task Force for Acceptable Student Behavior Related to Academic Performance has completed its report (see Addendum I) and an excerpt from that report speaks to developing standards for acceptable student behavior. The Task Force report states:

> Three views are commonly expressed as to student conduct in our public schools today:
>
> (1) The first view is that student conduct is no worse today thar it was 20 - 30 years ago. Those who support this view claim that throughout history the "older" generation has always considered the "younger" generation deficient in right conduct and proper manners and behavior.
>
> (2) The second view is that basic societal changes have occurred--the role of women as workers and not homemakers, the decline of the nuclear family, the increase in the number of employed students, a decline in the respect for older people, a loosening of moral and conduct standards--such changes having the effect of making students less interested in and receptive to learning. Because these changes are deeply embedded in the structure of our society, actions on the part of the school system by themselves to maintain high standards are doomed to little or no success.
>
> (3) The third view is that conduct standards of students have definitely declined, and, although admitting that societal changes have played a significant role in such decline, the school as an institution can have a great impact in developing and maintaining proper conduct in the schools. This is the view of our committee.
>
> As a necessary corollary to view (3) it would have to be admitted that those directly connected with schools--administrator, teacher, parent, school board--have in the past few decades been failing to do some things they should have been doing to maintain the best learning environment.

Conclusion and Further Recommendations
(Cont.)

This unfortunately is where the rub comes. Each group directly involved with our schools is eager to point to another group(s) as the principal cause of the decline in student conduct standards. The net effect of the blame shifting is to create a situation in which no group is willing to accept responsibility for the problem, and thus in all probability the situation will become worse.

We suggest that all of the goups named share in the responsibility for good education and thus all share in the solutions to problems facing education.

The report further states:

Some types of behavior are essential for a satisfactory learning environment. The task force recommends the following standards for academically related behavior in the Tulsa Public Schools. Students will be expected to:

1. attend class daily.
2. be on time for each class.
3. bring required materials to each class.
4. accept the teacher's right to teach and the student's right to learn.
5. be attentive to and participate in the learning process in each classroom.
6. complete all assignments as required by the teacher.
7. accept responsibility for their actions.
8. be courteous and considerate toward others.
9. do their own work on tests, homework and classwork.

Parents must also be supportive of the actions prescribed by the school considered to be in the best interest of pupils, i.e., homework assignments, punctuality, course selection, and establishing meaningful educational goals.

The Path Ahead

The commission left many unanswered questions. For example, what should be done for the 48 percent of American young people who are not college bound?

Opportunities for vocational training for those who are not college bound must not only be continued, but expanded.

Within the years ahead, thousands of our pupils will be cycled through Computer Literacy courses. But, what are we doing to train young people who can install, operate, maintain, and repair systems that may incorporate combinations of electric motors, digital circuits, mechanisms, hydraulic activators, lenses, light sources, and transductors?

Finally, one editorial writer put it, "It was a conspicuous omission for the Commission not to be asked for financing suggestions along with prescriptions that would cost billions of extra dollars."

Although much can be done to respond to the Commission's recommendations without additional dollars, even the casual observer would agree that many of the Commission's recommendations will require billions of dollars across the nation to implement.

While some question public readiness to support huge increases in funding, there is little doubt Oklahomans won't settle for anything less than current levels. A recent report by The Oklahoma Poll covering state legislative issues found 86 percent are strongly opposed to cuts in spending for public education.

The same support for Oklahoma's public schools was evident in a second poll conducted in May, 1983 by the same organization, headed by Kenneth D. Bailey, Ph.D. In an assessment of public school performance, 60 percent of those whose children attended public schools rated the job public schools are doing in their communities as excellent or good.

Every facet of the Tulsa community has reflected a commitment to a strong school system. Armed with that knowledge, we face the future with enthusiasm, and with the expectation that we will provide an instructional program devoted to excellence; that we will produce young people who can think for themselves; who understand their cultural traditions; who respect their rich heritage; but who, above all, can live compassionately with their fellow man. Public education is the key to perpetuating the democratic way of life we have enjoyed these past two hundred years. We cannot, we must not, fail.

Standards of
Acceptable Student Behavior
Related to
Academic Performance

Addendum I

STANDARDS OF

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

RELATED TO

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

A
Report of the
Task Force to Develop
Standards for Acceptable Student
Behavioral Expectations
Related to Academic Performance

TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

JUNE, 1983

DEVELOPING STANDARDS OF ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

INTRODUCTION

In April, 1977, the Superintendent established a task force to study discipline in the school system. The major effort of the task force was spent in studying the level of disruptive behavior and in dealing with the importance of rules, guidelines, policies, procedures, and punishment in maintaining acceptable school discipline.

The work of the task force resulted in the revision of some of the district level discipline regulations and procedures and in the writing of some additional regulations. The task force also submitted a number of recommendations for improving discipline in the schools, among which was the recommendation that "The administration and faculty in each school should develop a plan for more effective communication and coordination of discipline policies and procedures among teachers, counselors, students, parents, and administrators. The plan should include provisions for the periodic review, evaluation, and revision of these policies and procedures."

The discipline task force in 1977-78 dealt with regulations and procedures for handling "major" causes of disruption. It did not address procedures and regulations for handling "minor" misbehaviors that cause disruptions of classroom decorum and time-on-task such as failure to bring materials to class, yawning loudly, failure to follow routines, and disrespect for the rights of others. There is a regulation in the discipline handbook, "Regulations on Student Affairs," which refers to students who "persist in interferring with the teaching-learning process, or refuse to participate in learning activities assigned by the teacher."

Some confusion persists in how to treat the "minor" misbehaviors mentioned in the preceding paragraph. If they are to be treated as "discipline" problems, what are the rules governing them? Whose responsibility is it to define and enforce the rules?

As a result of the confusion, the administration and the TCTA agreed during the summer of 198[illegible] to form a task force to develop standards for acceptable student behavior related to academic performance in the Tulsa Public Schools. The task force met to deal with behavior in areas such as using good manners, following instructions, observing routines, paying attention, and respecting the rights of others which are not necessarily addressed in the school district's regulations on student affairs. It is misbehavior in these areas that creates the greatest hindrance to effective learning and constantly erodes time-on-task. During the child's school years, less than twelve percent of his/her time is spent in the classroom. At best, schools have little time in which to meet the demands placed on them by society. In this context, the issues of time-on-task and academic achievement become urgent. If educators and parents, working together, can establish behavioral standards that will increase time-on-task, the over-all learning environment of the school will surely improve.

PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION

Three views are commonly expressed as to student conduct in our public schools today:

(1) The first view is that student conduct is no worse today than it was 20 - 30 years ago. Those who support this view claim that throughout history the "older" generation has always considered the "younger" generation deficient in right conduct and proper manners and behavior.

(2) The second view is that basic societal changes have occurred - the role of women as workers and not homemakers, the decline of the nuclear family, the increase in the number of employed students, a decline in the respect for older people, a loosening of moral and conduct standards - such changes having the effect of making students less interested in and receptive to learning. Because these changes are deeply embedded in the structure of our society, actions on the part of the school system by themselves to maintain high standards are doomed to little or no success.

(3) The third view is that conduct standards of students have definitely declined, and, although admitting that societal changes have played a significant role in such decline, the school as an institution can have a great impact in developing and maintaining proper conduct in the schools. This is the view of our committee.

As a necessary corollary to view (3) it would have to be admitted that those directly connected with schools - administrator, teacher, parent, school board - have in the past few decades been failing to do some things they should have been doing to maintain the best learning environment.

This unfortunately is where the rub comes. Each group directly involved with our schools is eager to point to another group(s) as the principal cause of the decline in student conduct standards. The net effect of the blame shifting is to create a situation in which no group is willing to accept responsibility for the problem, and thus in all probability the situation will become worse.

We suggest that all of the groups named share in the responsibility for good education and thus all share in the solutions to problems facing education. Parents, teachers, administrators (both building and central), school boards, however, have different roles to play in good education. Each group has a specific function to fulfill in maintaining the kind of student behavior expectations necessary for quality education. But before each group can properly fulfill its role, there must be agreement on certain principles which underlie student conduct expectations. We suggest the following underlying principles as necessary to achieving and maintaining a high level of classroom learning experiences.

I. Proper student behavior involves, each group in its own unique way, parents, school board members, teachers, building administrators, and central administrators. Each group has its own unique primary responsibility - distinct from any other group, but connected with those of the other groups at certain key points. (Thus, for example, the teacher has the primary responsibility of presenting material directly to students in a comprehensible manner and drawing the best from the

students; but this cannot be achieved if the building administrator does not enforce high standards of classroom effort; and the building administrator cannot do this if the central administrator will not support the principal in enforcing standards.)

II. The primary and overriding function of the school is to educate students in the classroom. Social development may be a fortuitous outgrowth of the school environment, but such development in no way should diminish the central function of the school. (If the school does not insist that classroom learning is the pre-eminent end of the school, then failure to fully participate in the classroom learning process will not be considered serious. "After all, Tom is learning a lot just by associating with his peers," is a statement which if accepted is deadly to formal education.)

III. Public school education usually involves a group of students and a teacher. Because group instruction is involved, individual conduct within the group must be based on a higher standard than conduct between two individuals. By the same token, discipline of a student must be viewed from two respectives, (1) what is good for the individual student, and (2) what is necessary as a deterrent to other students. (This is a most significant point for all connected with schools. A half-stifled yawn, a mild impertinence, talking out of turn - these and innumerable other specific actions are not particularly objectionable if practiced in a one-to-one situation or in a very small group. However, when practiced in a classroom, such 'minor' incidents can be devastating to learning. We need to make it clear that "minor' student misbehavior must be judged in a classroom context not a private context.)

IV. Although the individuality of each child should be respected as far as possible, no student has a right to have his individual behavior lessen the learning opportunities of others. (Much has been written and discussed recently about the 'rights' of individual students. Certainly students do and should have rights. But no court decision has said that a student has a right to attend regular classrooms, and while there, to disrupt the learning process. All cases we are aware of give the school extremely broad discretion to set rules for student behavior and conduct. We believe these student rights cases have been blown out of proportion for reasons which we will not discuss here. As to discipline, society recognizes this twofold nature of correction: Correction of the individual and deterrence to others.)

V. All students who attend a K-12 public school are of an age to know the rudiments of good behavior in a group. Thus a student can be held responsible for his/her conduct to a great extent. Obviously the older the student the more he/she can be held responsible for his behavior. (The child as an 'innocent', totally shaped by his surroundings and thus not personally responsible for his behavior, is an idea going back to at least 1800. Now obviously a kindergartener cannot be held as responsible for proper behavior as can a high school senior. But even the very young can understand to a great extent what

proper behavior is and thus be held accountable for misbehavior. It seems that in the public schools we will go to almost any length to place the blame for non-academic behavior on someone other than the student. We need to assume the student is responsible for his behavior, until evidence shows the contrary; not as we too often do now - assume someone else is responsible - be that someone else the teacher, parent, or principal.)

VI. The public school classroom is not a custodial institution. Students who fail to meet minimum standards of effort and conduct should not be placed in regular classrooms. (Under state law schools may have certain custodial responsibilities. But in those cases where the custodial part of a child's education outweighs the learning part, special alternatives other than the regular classroom must be used.)

VII. The teacher-pupil relationship involves:

A. A teacher knowledgeable in his/her subject matter, with the ability and desire to convey the subject matter to the students.

B. A student desiring to acquire the subject matter.

The absence of A or B makes learning impossible.

VIII. Motivation, i.e., the desire to learn, is the primary responsibility of parent and student with younger children, and with older students, the child himself/herself. Teachers and administrators have the responsibility to build upon and enhance motivation. They cannot be expected to create motivation. (These two statements VII and VIII strike at the very heart of the day-to-day problem in our classrooms. The rise of psychology as a science and its fusion with education mixed with the concept of non-responsibility (especially for the young) has led to the idea of the educator as the master psychologist who, if properly trained, should have no trouble manipulating the behavior of individual students and groups of students. Teachers, however, are teachers and not psychologists and students are living individuals, not pieces of plastic, molded at will by the teacher. Certainly teachers are expected to have a reasonable understanding of individual child and group behavior and to use this understanding in their classrooms. We must not accept the belief that the only essential of teaching is the ability to control disruptive behavior and to make the non-interested interested. A doctor is evaluated by his ability to make those well who desire to be cured. He is not evaluated by his ability to convince those who do not want to be cured, that they should be: And so teachers must be evaluated by their ability to teach those who desire to learn, not by their ability to 'control' those who do not desire to learn.)

We are fully aware that all statements of principle must be understood in the light of reason, common sense, and compassion. We believe the majority of our students conduct themselves properly at school and are interested in learning. There, of course, will always be those who for one reason or another do not desire to learn. Many students fall between the 'good' student and 'bad' student. These students will go the way in which the system is structured. If

we expect high conduct and learning standards as an unquestioned part of the school setting, this 'middle' group will benefit immeasurably.

It is often said of private schools that they have a great advantage over public schools in that they (private schools) can be selective in the students they accept. Even supporters of public schools at times admit that we are 'forced' to accept the unruly, and the unmotivated, and thus conclude that our schools must be inferior to private schools. Such a belief can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. But we do not accept this pessimism. If public schools will hold firm to the idea that they are learning institutions and then insist that students conduct themselves in a way necessary for maximum learning opportunity, then the inclusiveness of the public schools will be a matter of pride, not an excuse.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

Some types of behavior are essential for a satisfactory learning environment. The task force recommends the following standards for academically related behavior in the Tulsa Public Schools. Students will be expected to:

1. attend class daily.
2. be on time for each class.
3. bring required materials to each class.
4. accept the teacher's right to teach and the student's right to learn.
5. be attentive to and participate in the learning process in each classroom.
6. complete all assignments as required by the teacher.
7. accept responsibility for their actions.
8. be courteous and considerate toward others.
9. do their own work on tests, homework and classwork.

Standards of behavior developed by the school planning committee should be stated so that they are specific enough to be clearly understood (see Rules for Rules on page 11).

PLANNING FOR BETTER STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

Good discipline and an orderly learning environment are more likely to exist in a school where the staff has developed a plan to ensure their existence. The school plan should include a minimum number of essential behavioral standards which will be accepted and reinforced by the entire staff. Specific strategies for both positive and negative reinforcement of the behavior standards are an essential part of the plan.

IMPLEMENTATION

Any plan for promoting more productive behavioral standards in a school will require the participation in and the exercise of certain responsibilities by individuals and groups associated with the school.

These responsibilities are as follows:

I. Administrative Responsibilities

A. Development

1. ESC will present task force report to all principals.

2. Principal will present the task force report to entire faculty at one time.

3. Principal will initiate the process of selecting a committee to write a detailed school plan (suggestion: 4 teachers, 1 student, 1 counselor/dean, 1 parent, and 1 administrator).

4. Principal will provide the opportunity for the committee to present to the faculty for endorsement.

5. Principal will provide the opportunity for the committee to present the school plan to the community for endorsement.

B. Implementation

1. The administration will provide the plan in written form to the total school population and the parents.

2. The administration will help provide various methods of positive reinforcement (see suggestions for positive reinforcement, pages 16 & 17).

3. Administrators and counselors will facilitate contact between teachers and parents.

4. Administrators will treat these "minor" misbehaviors according to the procedure outlined in the Regulations on Student Affairs, page 9, #5.

5. The administration will initiate a process of evaluation and revision of school plan each semester.

6. The administration will consistently and uniformly enforce and support the school plan.

II. Faculty Responsibilities

A. Development

1. Review the task force report.

2. Participate in the needs assessment for the building.

3. Planning committee will lead the faculty in development of a school plan with adequate opportunities for faculty in-put during various stages of development.

4. Planning committee will present plan to staff for endorsement.

B. Implementation

1. Consistently enforce the school plan.

2. Uniformly support the school plan.

III. Parental Responsibilities: Parents will be expected to become aware of and support the school plan. This plan, developed by the school staff, will be based on the guidelines set forth by the Tulsa Public Schools' Task Force on behavioral expectations. Parents can be supportive by:

1. attending conferences concerning their child.

2. participating in PTA meetings.

3. visiting the classroom.

4. supervising homework and providing a quiet place for study

(a) limiting time spent watching T.V., playing video games, and listening to loud music.

(b) establishing a regular time for study.

5. ensuring adequate rest and nutrition for their child.

6. providing the required school supplies.

7. giving their child's academic growth first priority.

8. holding the child accountable in areas of responsibility at home and school.

9. insisting on prompt and regular school attendance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the task force believe that a more effective learning environment will exist throughout the school system when the issues of behavioral standards and a level of discipline conducive to high academic performance have been successfully addressed in each school. To accomplish these ends the task force recommends that:

1. the task force report be presented to the Board of Education for endorsement.

2. the task force report be presented to the TCTA Delegates Assembly.

3. copies of the report be made available to the news media, City Council PTA and a minimum number of copies be made available to distribute in each building.

4. each school will establish a planning committee to develop its plan for improving standards of student behavior.

5. the building plan for improving standards of behavior for students be included as a part of the activity of objective #3 ("to create an orderly environment for learning") of the SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS PROGRAM.

6. parent workshops or seminars be conducted to provide information about and encourage support of the school plan.

RESOURCES

The following section includes suggested resources which may be used by school committees in developing and implementing the school plan. The following resources are listed:

1. Rules for Rules
2. Class Rules
3. Personal Evaluation
4. Parents' Expectations
5. Social Reinforcers for Children and Youth
6. Other Resources

RULES FOR RULES

Rules are guidelines, established procedures, or agreements between people working in a social situation. Rules should be seen as methods for teaching behavior. While it is often necessary for the person in charge to make the rules, it should be recognized that it is important for those governed by the rules to understand the need or reasons for the rules and the behaviors the rules imply.

In a small handbook called Child Management, Donald and Judith Smith (Champaign, Illinois, Research Press Co., 1978) present some "rules for rules." The idea is that effective rules meet certain criteria. These criteria serve as guidelines for making rules. We have expanded upon those criteria to help school personnel make more effective educational rules.

1. A RULE MUST BE STATED AND TAUGHT IN SUCH A WAY THAT THOSE AFFECTED BY THE RULE CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT BEHAVIOR IS EXPECTED.

   It is difficult to know how to behave when a rule is something like "be good" or "don't misbehave" or "be a good citizen." When rules are defined in very broad generalities or in vague terms, people are at a loss. They must constantly look to the person in charge to determine what he or she means by "good" or "appropriate." Even when rules are clearly stated, the person making the rule must be sure to teach those affected by the rules the behaviors that are expected.

2. A RULE MUST BE REASONABLE.

   A rule is unreasonable if (1) the student cannot perform the required behavior; (2) there is no necessity to require the behavior; (3) the rule attempts to control or eliminate behavior that is normal and desirable for children, young people, or adults; or (4) the rule requires more resources to enforce than are feasible. Educators who make rules must constantly ask themselves "Is the rule necessary for meeting the educational needs of students?"

3. A RULE MUST BE ENFORCEABLE.

   Some rules are unreasonable. Others may be reasonable or unreasonable but for some reason are impossible to enforce. Making and trying to enforce such rules is frustrating and causes confusion and complications. Focus time and energy on rules which can be enforced.

4. ONCE A RULE IS MADE, ENFORCE IT EVERY TIME UNTIL THE NEW BEHAVIOR IS LEARNED.

   Smith and Smith suggest asking "what is the rule" when reminding students of the behavior needed. Once the rule has been taught and the adult knows that the expected behaviors are understood, he or she should try to get the child or young person to state the rule rather than the adult repeating it over and over.

5. IGNORE BEHAVIOR NOT COVERED BY THE RULE.

Youngsters may engage in distracting behavior such as pouting, tears, belligerance, or bursts of temper. Such behavior might be called a "game" to distract the adult from enforcing the rule. The rule enforcer should try to concentrate on enforcing the rule--on GETTING THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR.

Wayson, W. W., "Developing Schools That Teach Self-Discipline," Synergetic Development, Inc., p 46.

CLASS RULES

1. Be in your seat when the bell rings to begin class and stop talking.

2. You are to remain seated at all times unless given permission to leave your seat.

3. Raise your hand when there is a question or comment.

4. Be prepared for class with textbook, paper and pencil.

5. Keep the room clean from litter.

6. Use your class time wisely; you will learn and I will be able to teach.

7. Use courtesy, consideration and appreciation at all times.

NOTE: This is an example of the rules used in local schools. It may be used as a resource in developing the local school plan.

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. In order to become a better student, you should:

	YES	NO
A. Be interested in each course.	____	____
B. Master the basic ideas and skills in each of your courses.	____	____
C. Review each week what you have learned in each of your courses.	____	____
D. Get satisfaction from learning in each of your courses.	____	____
E. Avoid such distractions as talking, telephone, excessive noise from radio, Hi-Fi, or TV when studying.	____	____
F. Write down, in full, assignments to be studied.	____	____
G. Scan the whole assignment; study the parts in detail; then review the assignment.	____	____
H. Organize your notes into an outline when writing a composition.	____	____
I. Increase your vocabulary.	____	____
J. Use the table of contents, index, appendix, glossary, and other informational aids in a book.	____	____
K. Use a dictionary when you need it.	____	____
L. Use a different section of your notebook for each course.	____	____
M. Work with a committee either as an ordinary member or as a chairman.	____	____
N. Participate actively in class recitation and discussions.	____	____
O. Behave courteously in the classroom.	____	____
P. Prepare for examinations by doing your work day by day and reviewing each week.	____	____
Q. Do your assignments neatly and promptly.	____	____
R. Study your hardest subjects first.	____	____
S. Follow a study plan and a time schedule.	____	____
T. Keep your desk clear of unnecessary and distracting materials.	____	____
U. Take only a few short "breaks" when you study.	____	____
V. Have the necessary books and supplies and other study material at hand.	____	____

If you have five or more NO answers, you should begin a definite program for improvement.

"D GRADE IN NOVEMBER MAY MEAN F GRADE IN MAY"

NOTE: This is an example of material used in one school to reinforce student expectations.

P A R E N T S, did you know that:

1. Each day's assignments are placed on the board in each classroom? Each student should write out the assignment in full leaving nothing to the student's memory.

2. Teachers are in the building at (insert time here) to help students with their incomplete work or work the student does not understand?

3. Teachers are available from (insert time here), and their preparation period for making a time for parent-teacher-student-counselor conference in regard to a specific class? Call your child's counselor for an appointment.

4. Your child should review each academic subject for at least fifteen minutes each day?

5. It takes from two to four weeks to develop good study habits?

6. Counselors recommend at least one parent-student-counselor conference a year? If a parent deems it necessary, additional conferences may be arranged by making an appointment with your child's counselor.

7. You should supervise your child's techniques of study? Please let us aid you if you need help.

8. The home and the school must work in unison if your child is to obtain the maximum from senior high school?

9. Grade cards are issued every nine weeks a year with progress reports issued during the 5th week of the quarter?

10. The best teachers are available to your child, therefore, it is up to the student to put forth the effort to achieve?

"85% OF ALL STUDY ACTIVITY DEPENDS ON READING"

NOTE: This is an example of information used in one school to establish parent expectations.

SOCIAL REINFORCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Children

Nod
Smile
Pat on shoulder, head, knee, back
Hug
Wink
Kiss
Signal or gesture to signify approval
Swing around
Touch on cheek
Holding on lap
Fulfillment of requests
Eating with children
Assistance
Joining class during recess
Saying*
- yes
- nice
- good
- great
- fine
- very good
- fantastic
- very fine
- excellent
- unbelievable
- marvelous
- atta-girl, atta-boy
- far out
- I like that
- right on
- right
- that's right
- correct
- _____ is really paying attention
- wonderful
- you really pay attention well
- you do that well
- I'm pleased with (proud of) you
- that was very nice of you
- that's good
- that's great
- wow
- oh boy
- very nice
- good work
- good job
- great going
- good for you

*With specific reason added.

Youth

Nod
Smile
Laugh (with, not at)
Wink
Signal or gesture of approval
Orienting glance directly toward face
Assistance when requested
Positive comment on appearance
Pat on the back
Handshake
Asking student to discuss something before group
Asking student about items of interest to individual
Asking student to demonstrate something
Saying*
- very good
- okay
- beautiful
- good for you
- exactly
- thank you
- that's interesting
- _____ is excellent
- that's great
- yeah
- great
- right
- I agree
- good job
- good idea
- fantastic
- fine
- fine answer
- what a clever idea!
- unbelievable
- you really are creative, innovative, and so on
- see how you're improving
- that looks better than last time
- keep up the good work
- you've apparently got the idea
- little by little we're getting there
- see how _____ has improved
- [redacted]
- you're really becoming an expert at this
- do you see what an effective job _____ has done?
- you are very patient

Children

_____ is a hard worker today;
good for you
that's the way
that's interesting
much better
okay
you should show this to your parents
you're doing better
that's perfect
that's another one you got right
you're doing very well
see how well _____ is doing?
look how well he (she) did
_____ is really working
watch what he did; do it again
show the class your _____
_____ is really working hard; he is going to be able to _____
wow, look at _____ work
you look nice today
_____ is working nicely; keep up the good work
I can really tell _____ is thinking by what she just said
_____ is sitting quietly and doing his work; good for you
_____ is listening with such concentration; that's very polite, _____, thank you
you should be proud of the way you're sitting quietly and listening to me while I'm giving a lesson
_____ just earned another point by sitting quietly and listening while I was reading; good job _____
_____ walked quietly to her seat; thank you
good, you sharpened your pencil before class; now you're ready to go
_____ has all of her supplies on her desk and is ready to go, good!
_____ has gotten his materials and has started to work already, good going!
it's nice to see the way _____ raises his hand when he wants to share something with the class
the whole class is really being polite in listening to one another
this whole row is sitting quietly with their chairs on the floor; great!

Youth

that shows a lot of work
you look great today
it really makes me feel good when I see so many of you hard at work
that's the best job I've seen today
you're paying attention so nicely
the interest you're showing is great
it makes me happy to see you working so well
that's a thoughful (courteous) thing to do for _____
_____ has gotten his materials and has started to work already; good going!
_____ is ready to start
you're really very considerate of one another

OTHER RESOURCES

Video Tape

Coloroso, Barbara. "Discipline: Winning at Teaching." Educational Consulting Associates, 1981.

Filmstrip

Nighswander, James K. "Planning for Better School Discipline." Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1982.

Books

Brookover, Wilbur B., et al. "Creating Effective Schools: An Inservice Program for Enhancing School Learning Climate and Achievement." Learning Publications, Inc., 1982.

Wayson, William W., et al. "Handbook for Developing Schools with Good Discipline." Phi Delta Kappa Commission on Discipline, 1982.

TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TASK FORCE

TO DEVELOP
STANDARDS FOR ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS
RELATED TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Elementary

G. W. Smith, Principal	Phillips
Shirley Stanley, Principal	Sandburg

Junior High

Louis R. Miller, Assistant Principal	Nimitz

Middle School

Wilma Bagwell, Assistant Principal	Carver

Senior High

Roger Smith, Assistant Principal	Edison
Fredrick H. Wright, Acting Assistant Principal	Central

TULSA CLASSROOM TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Jim Brown	Wilson Junior High
Connie Koch	Grimes Elementary
Carolyn McCondichie	Burroughs Elementary
Pat Morgan	Memorial Senior High
Linda Cottier Wade	Clinton Middle
Marilyn Yoachum	East Central Senior High

TULSA COUNCIL OF PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

Ethel Bullington	Elementary Level
Judy Weber	Junior High Level
Judy Wenger	Senior High Level

John Haynes, President	Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association
C. Wayne Bland, Director	Junior High/Middle School Education

A Nation At Risk

The Report of the National Commission

on Excellence in Education

Addendum II

A Nation At Risk

The Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education

Introduction

Secretary of Education T. H. Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education on August 26, 1981, directing it to examine the quality of education in the United States and to make a report to the Nation and to him within 18 months of its first meeting. In accordance with the Secretary's instructions, this report contains practical recommendations for educational improvement and fulfills the Commission's responsibilities under the terms of its charter.

The Commission was created as a result of the Secretary's concern about "the widespread public perception that something is seriously remiss in our educational system." Soliciting the "support of all who care about our future," the Secretary noted that he was establishing the Commission based on his "responsibility to provide leadership, constructive criticism, and effective assistance to schools and universities."

The Commission's charter contained several specific charges to which we have given particular attention. These included:

- assessing the quality of teaching and learning in our Nation's public and private schools, colleges, and universities;
- comparing American schools and colleges with those of other advanced nations;
- studying the relationship between college admissions requirements and student achievement in high school;
- identifying educational programs which result in notable student success in college;
- assessing the degree to which major social and educational changes in the last quarter century have affected student achievement; and
- defining problems which must be faced and overcome if we are successfully to pursue the course of excellence in education.

The Commission's charter directed it to pay particular attention to teenage youth, and we have done so largely by focusing on high schools. Selective attention was given to the formative years spent in elementary schools, to higher education, and to vocational and technical programs. We refer those interested in the need for similar reform in higher education to the recent report of the American Council on Education, *To Strengthen the Quality of Higher Education*.

In going about its work the Commission has relied in the main upon five sources of information:

—papers commissioned from experts on a variety of educational issues;
—administrators, teachers, students, representatives of professional and public groups, parents, business leaders, public officials, and scholars who testified at eight meetings of the full Commission, six public hearings, two panel discussions, a symposium, and a series of meetings organized by the Department of Education's Regional Offices;
—existing analyses of problems in education;
—letters from concerned citizens, teachers, and administrators who volunteered extensive comments on problems and possibilities in American education; and
—descriptions of notable programs and promising approaches in education.

To these public-minded citizens who took the trouble to share their concerns with us—frequently at their own expense in time, money, and effort—we extend our thanks. In all cases, we have benefited from their advice and taken their views into account; how we have treated their suggestions is, of course, our responsibility alone. In addition, we are grateful to the individuals in schools, universities, foundations, business, government, and communities throughout the United States who provided the facilities and staff so necessary to the success of our many public functions.

The Commission was impressed during the course of its activities by the diversity of opinion it received regarding the condition of American education and by conflicting views about what should be done. In many ways, the membership of the Commission itself reflected that diversity and difference of opinion during the course of its work. This report, nevertheless, gives evidence that men and women of good will can agree on common goals and on ways to pursue them.

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The Essay

Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world. This report is concerned with only one of the many causes and dimensions of the problem, but it is the one that undergirds American prosperity, security, and civility. We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur—others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments.

If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge. Moreover, we have dismantled essential support systems which helped make those gains possible. We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament.

Our society and its educational institutions seem to have lost sight of the basic purposes of schooling, and of the high expectations and disci-

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"America's position in the world may once have been reasonably secure with only a few exceptionally well-trained men and women. It is no longer."

plined effort needed to attain them. This report, the result of 18 months of study, seeks to generate reform of our educational system in fundamental ways and to renew the Nation's commitment to schools and colleges of high quality throughout the length and breadth of our land.

That we have compromised this commitment is, upon reflection, hardly surprising, given the multitude of often conflicting demands we have placed on our Nation's schools and colleges. They are routinely called on to provide solutions to personal, social, and political problems that the home and other institutions either will not or cannot resolve. We must understand that these demands on our schools and colleges often exact an educational cost as well as a financial one.

On the occasion of the Commission's first meeting, President Reagan noted the central importance of education in American life when he said: "Certainly there are few areas of American life as important to our society, to our people, and to our families as our schools and colleges." This report, therefore, is as much an open letter to the American people as it is a report to the Secretary of Education. We are confident that the American people, properly informed, will do what is right for their children and for the generations to come.

The Risk

History is not kind to idlers. The time is long past when America's destiny was assured simply by an abundance of natural resources and inexhaustible human enthusiasm, and by our relative isolation from the malignant problems of older civilizations. The world is indeed one global village. We live among determined, well-educated, and strongly motivated competitors. We compete with them for international standing and markets, not only with products but also with the ideas of our laboratories and neighborhood workshops. America's position in the world may once have been reasonably secure with only a few exceptionally well-trained men and women. It is no longer.

The risk is not only that the Japanese make automobiles more efficiently than Americans and have government subsidies for development and export. It is not just that the South Koreans recently built the world's most efficient steel mill, or that American machine tools, once the pride of the world, are being displaced by German products. It is also that these developments signify a redistribution of trained capability throughout the globe. Knowledge, learning, information, and skilled intelligence are the new raw materials of international commerce and are today spreading throughout the world as vigorously as miracle drugs, synthetic fertilizers, and blue jeans did earlier. If only to keep and improve on the slim competitive edge we still retain in world markets, we must dedicate ourselves to the reform of our educational system for the benefit of all—old and young alike, affluent and poor, majority and minority. Learning is the indispensable investment required for success in the "information age" we are entering.

Our concern, however, goes well beyond matters such as industry and commerce. It also includes the intellectual, moral, and spiritual strengths of our people which knit together the very fabric of our society. The people of the United States need to know that individuals in our society who do not possess the levels of skill, literacy, and training essential to this new era will be effectively disenfranchised, not simply from the material rewards that accompany competent performance, but also from the chance to participate fully in our national life. A high level of shared education is essential to a free, democratic society and to the fostering of a common culture, especially in a country that prides itself on pluralism and individual freedom.

For our country to function, citizens must be able to reach some common understandings on complex issues, often on short notice and on the basis of conflicting or incomplete evidence. Education helps form these common understandings, a point Thomas Jefferson made long ago in his justly famous dictum:

> I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them but to inform their discretion.

Part of what is at risk is the promise first made on this continent: All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself.

Indicators of Risk

The educational dimensions of the risk before us have been amply documented in testimony received by the Commission. For example:

- International comparisons of student achievement, completed a decade ago, reveal that on 19 academic tests American students were never first or second and, in comparison with other industrialized nations, were last seven times.
- Some 23 million American adults are functionally illiterate by the simplest tests of everyday reading, writing, and comprehension.
- About 13 percent of all 17-year-olds in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate. Functional illiteracy among minority youth may run as high as 40 percent.
- Average achievement of high school students on most standardized tests is now lower than 26 years ago when Sputnik was launched.
- Over half the population of gifted students do not match their tested ability with comparable achievement in school.
- The College Board's Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT) demonstrate a virtually unbroken decline from 1963 to 1980. Average verbal scores fell over 50 points and average mathematics scores dropped nearly 40 points.
- College Board achievement tests also reveal consistent declines in recent years in such subjects as physics and English.
- Both the number and proportion of students demonstrating superior achievement on the SATs (i.e., those with scores of 650 or higher) have also dramatically declined.
- Many 17-year-olds do not possess the "higher order" intellectual skills we should expect of them. Nearly 40 percent cannot draw inferences from written material; only one-fifth can write a persuasive essay; and only one-third can solve a mathematics problem requiring several steps.
- There was a steady decline in science achievement scores of U.S. 17-year-olds as measured by national assessments of science in 1969, 1973, and 1977.
- Between 1975 and 1980, remedial mathematics courses in public 4-year colleges increased by 72 percent and now constitute one-quarter of all mathematics courses taught in those institutions.
- Average tested achievement of students graduating from college is also lower.
- Business and military leaders complain that they are required to spend millions of dollars on costly remedial education and training programs in such basic skills as reading, writing, spelling, and computation. The Department of the Navy, for example, reported to the commission that one-quarter of its recent recruits cannot read at the ninth grade level, the minimum needed simply to understand written safety instructions. Without remedial work they cannot even begin, much less complete, the sophisticated training essential in much of the modern military.

These deficiencies come at a time when the demand for highly skilled workers in new fields is accelerating rapidly. For example:

- Computers and computer-controlled equipment are penetrating every aspect of our lives—homes, factories, and offices.
- One estimate indicates that by the turn of the century millions of jobs will involve laser technology and robotics.
- Technology is radically transforming a host of other occupations. They include health care, medical science, energy production, food processing, construction, and the building, repair, and maintenance of sophisticated scientific, educational, military, and industrial equipment.

Analysts examining these indicators of student performance and the demands for new skills have made some chilling observations. Educational researcher Paul Hurd concluded at the end of a thorough national survey of student

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achievement that within the context of the modern scientific revolution, "We are raising a new generation of Americans that is scientifically and technologically illiterate." In a similar vein, John Slaughter, a former director of the National Science Foundation, warned of "a growing chasm between a small scientific and technological elite and a citizenry ill-informed, indeed uninformed, on issues with a science component."

But the problem does not stop there, nor do all observers see it the same way. Some worry that schools may emphasize such rudiments as reading and computation at the expense of other essential skills such as comprehension, analysis, solving problems, and drawing conclusions. Still others are concerned that an over-emphasis on technical and occupational skills will leave little time for studying the arts and humanities that so enrich daily life, help maintain civility, and develop a sense of community. Knowledge of the humanities, they maintain, must be harnessed to science and technology if the latter are to remain creative and humane, just as the humanities need to be informed by science and technology if they are to remain relevant to the human condition. Another analyst, Paul Copperman, has drawn a sobering conclusion. Until now, he has noted:

> Each generation of Americans has outstripped its parents in education, in literacy, and in economic attainment. For the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach, those of their parents.

It is important, of course, to recognize that *the average citizen* today is better educated and more knowledgeable than the average citizen of a generation ago—more literate, and exposed to more mathematics, literature, and science. The positive impact of this fact on the well-being of our country and the lives of our people cannot be overstated. Nevertheless, *the average graduate* of our schools and colleges today is not as well-educated as the average graduate of 25 or 35 years ago, when a much smaller proportion of our population completed high school and college. The negative impact of this fact likewise cannot be overstated.

Hope and Frustration

Statistics and their interpretation by experts show only the surface dimension of the difficulties we face. Beneath them lies a tension between hope and frustration that characterizes current attitudes about education at every level.

We have heard the voices of high school and college students, school board members, and teachers; of leaders of industry, minority groups, and higher education; of parents and State officials. We could hear the hope evident in their commitment to quality education and in their descriptions of outstanding programs and schools. We could also hear the intensity of their frustration, a growing impatience with shoddiness in many walks of American life, and the complaint that this shoddiness is too often reflected in our schools and colleges. Their frustration threatens to overwhelm their hope.

What lies behind this emerging national sense of frustration can be described as both a dimming of personal expectations and the fear of losing a shared vision for America.

On the personal level the student, the parent, and the caring teacher all perceive that a basic promise is not being kept. More and more young people emerge from high school ready neither for college nor for work. This predicament becomes more acute as the knowledge base continues its rapid expansion, the number of traditional jobs shrinks, and new jobs demand greater sophistication and preparation.

On a broader scale, we sense that this undertone of frustration has significant political implications, for it cuts across ages, generations, races, and political and economic groups. We have come to understand that the public will demand that educational and political leaders act forcefully and effectively on these issues. Indeed, such demands have already appeared and could well become a unifying national preoccupation. This unity, however, can be achieved only if we avoid the unproductive tendency of some to search for scapegoats among the victims, such as the beleaguered teachers.

On the positive side is the significant movement by political and educational leaders to search for solutions—so far centering largely on the nearly desperate need for increased support for the teaching of mathematics and science. This movement is but a start on what we believe is a larger and more educationally encompassing need to improve teaching and learning in fields such as English, history, geography, economics, and foreign languages. We believe this movement must be broadened and directed toward reform and excellence throughout education.

Excellence in Education

We define "excellence" to mean several related things. At the level of the *individual learner*, it means performing on the boundary of individual ability in ways that test and push back personal limits, in school and in the workplace. Excellence characterizes a *school or college* that sets high expectations and goals for all learners, then tries in every way possible to help students reach them. Excellence characterizes a *society* that has adopted these policies, for it will then be prepared through the education and skill of its people to respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Our Nation's people and its schools and colleges must be committed to achieving excellence in all these senses.

We do not believe that a public commitment to excellence and educational reform must be made at the expense of a strong public commitment to the equitable treatment of our diverse population. The twin goals of equity and high-quality schooling have profound and practical meaning for our economy and society, and we cannot permit one to yield to the other either in principle or in practice. To do so would deny young people their chance to learn and live according to their aspirations and abilities. It also would lead to a generalized accommodation to mediocrity in our society on the one hand or the creation of an undemocratic elitism on the other.

Our goal must be to develop the talents of all to their fullest. Attaining that goal requires that we expect and assist all students to work to the limits of their capabilities. We should expect schools to have genuinely high standards rather than minimum ones, and parents to support and encourage their children to make the most of their talents and abilities.

The search for solutions to our educational problems must also include a commitment to life-long learning. The task of rebuilding our system of learning is enormous and must be properly understood and taken seriously: Although a million and a half new workers enter the economy each year from our schools and colleges, the adults working today will still make up about 75 percent of the workforce in the year 2000. These workers, and new entrants into the workforce, will need further education and retraining if they—and we as a Nation—are to thrive and prosper.

The Learning Society

In a world of ever-accelerating competition and change in the conditions of the workplace, of ever-greater danger, and of ever-larger opportunities for those prepared to meet them, educational reform should focus on the goal of creating a Learning Society. At the heart of such a society is the commitment to a set of values and to a system of education that affords all members the opportunity to stretch their minds to full capacity, from early childhood through adulthood, learning more as the world itself changes. Such a society has as a basic foundation the idea that education is important not only because of what it contributes to one's career goals but also because of the value it adds to the general quality of one's life. Also at the heart of the Learning Society are educational opportunities extending far beyond the traditional institutions of learning, our schools and colleges. They extend into homes and workplaces; into libraries, art galleries, museums, and science centers; indeed, into every place where the individual can develop and mature in work and life. In our view, formal schooling in youth is the essential foundation for learning throughout one's life. But without life-long learning, one's skills will become rapidly dated.

In contrast to the ideal of the Learning Society, however, we find that for too many people education means doing the minimum work necessary for the moment, then coasting through life on what may have been learned in its first quarter. But this should not surprise us because we tend to express our educational standards and

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expectations largely in terms of "minimum requirements." And where there should be a coherent continuum of learning, we have none, but instead an often incoherent, outdated patchwork quilt. Many individual, sometimes heroic, examples of schools and colleges of great merit do exist. Our findings and testimony confirm the vitality of a number of notable schools and programs, but their very distinction stands out against a vast mass shaped by tensions and pressures that inhibit systematic academic and vocational achievement for the majority of students. In some metropolitan areas basic literacy has become the goal rather than the starting point. In some colleges maintaining enrollments is of greater day-to-day concern than maintaining rigorous academic standards. And the ideal of academic excellence as the primary goal of schooling seems to be fading across the board in American education.

Thus, we issue this call to all who care about America and its future: to parents and students; to teachers, administrators, and school board members; to colleges and industry; to union members and military leaders; to governors and State legislators; to the President; to members of Congress and other public officials; to members of learned and scientific societies; to the print and electronic media; to concerned citizens everywhere. America is at risk.

We are confident that America can address this risk. If the tasks we set forth are initiated now and our recommendations are fully realized over the next several years, we can expect reform of our Nation's schools, colleges, and universities. This would also reverse the current declining trend—a trend that stems more from weakness of purpose, confusion of vision, underuse of talent, and lack of leadership, than from conditions beyond our control.

The Tools at Hand

It is our conviction that the essential raw materials needed to reform our educational system are waiting to be mobilized through effective leadership:

- —the natural abilities of the young that cry out to be developed and the undiminished concern of parents for the well-being of their children;
- —the commitment of the Nation to high retention rates in schools and colleges and to full access to education for all;
- —the persistent and authentic American dream that superior performance can raise one's state in life and shape one's own future;
- —the dedication, against all odds, that keeps teachers serving in schools and colleges, even as the rewards diminish;
- —our better understanding of learning and teaching and the implications of this knowledge for school practice, and the numerous examples of local success as a result of superior effort and effective dissemination;
- —the ingenuity of our policymakers, scientists, State and local educators, and scholars in formulating solutions once problems are better understood;
- —the traditional belief that paying for education is an investment in ever-renewable human resources that are more durable and flexible than capital plant and equipment, and the availability in this country of sufficient financial means to invest in education;
- —the equally sound tradition, from the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 until today, that the Federal Government should supplement State, local, and other resources to foster key national educational goals; and
- —the voluntary efforts of individuals, businesses, and parent and civic groups to cooperate in strengthening educational programs.

These raw materials, combined with the unparalleled array of educational organizations in America, offer us the possibility to create a Learning Society, in which public, private, and parochial schools; colleges and universities; vocational and technical schools and institutes; libraries; science centers, museums, and other cultural institutions; and corporate training and retraining programs offer opportunities and choices for all to learn throughout life.

The Public's Commitment

Of all the tools at hand, the public's support for education is the most powerful. In a message to a National Academy of Sciences meeting in May 1982, President Reagan commented on this fact when he said:

> This public awareness—and I hope public action—is long overdue. . . . This country was built on American respect for education. . . . Our challenge now is to create a resurgence of that thirst for education that typifies our Nation's history.

The most recent (1982) Gallup Poll of the *Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools* strongly supported a theme heard during our hearings: People are steadfast in their belief that education is the major foundation for the future strength of this country. They even considered education more important than developing the best industrial system or the strongest military force, perhaps because they understood education as the cornerstone of both. They also held that education is "extremely important" to one's future success, and that public education should be the top priority for additional Federal funds. Education occupied first place among 12 funding categories considered in the survey—above health care, welfare, and military defense, with 55 percent selecting public education as one of their first three choices. Very clearly, the public understands the primary importance of education as the foundation for a satisfying life, an enlightened and civil society, a strong economy, and a secure Nation.

At the same time, the public has no patience with undemanding and superfluous high school offerings. In another survey, more than 75 percent of all those questioned believed every student planning to go to college should take 4 years of mathematics, English, history/U.S. government, and science, with more than 50 percent adding 2 years each of a foreign language and economics or business. The public even supports requiring much of this curriculum for students who do not plan to go to college. These standards far exceed the strictest high school graduation requirements of any State today, and they also exceed the admission standards of all but a handful of our most selective colleges and universities.

Another dimension of the public's support offers the prospect of constructive reform. The best term to characterize it may simply be the honorable word "patriotism." Citizens know intuitively what some of the best economists have shown in their research, that education is one of the chief engines of a society's material well-being. They know, too, that education is the common bond of a pluralistic society and helps tie us to other cultures around the globe. Citizens also know in their bones that the safety of the United States depends principally on the wit, skill, and spirit of a self-confident people, today and tomorrow. It is, therefore, essential—especially in a period of long-term decline in educational achievement—for government at all levels to affirm its responsibility for nurturing the Nation's intellectual capital.

And perhaps most important, citizens know and believe that the meaning of America to the rest of the world must be something better than it seems to many today. Americans like to think of this Nation as the preeminent country for generating the great ideas and material benefits for all mankind. The citizen is dismayed at a steady 15-year decline in industrial productivity, as one great American industry after another falls to world competition. The citizen wants the country to act on the belief, expressed in our hearings and by the large majority in the Gallup Poll, that education should be at the top of the Nation's agenda.

Findings

We conclude that declines in educational performance are in large part the result of disturbing inadequacies in the way the educational process itself is often conducted. The findings that follow, culled from a much more extensive list, reflect four important aspects of the educational process: content, expectations, time, and teaching.

Findings Regarding Content

By content we mean the very "stuff" of education, the curriculum. Because of our concern about the curriculum, the Commission examined patterns of courses high school students took in 1964-69 compared with course patterns in 1976-81. On the basis of these analyses we conclude:

- —Secondary school curricula have been homogenized, diluted, and diffused to the point that they no longer have a central pur-

"Of all the tools at hand, the public's support for education is the most powerful."

pose. In effect, we have a cafeteria-style curriculum in which the appetizers and desserts can easily be mistaken for the main courses. Students have migrated from vocational and college preparatory programs to "general track" courses in large numbers. The proportion of students taking a general program of study has increased from 12 percent in 1964 to 42 percent in 1979.

—This curricular smorgasbord, combined with extensive student choice, explains a great deal about where we find ourselves today. We offer intermediate algebra, but only 31 percent of our recent high school graduates complete it; we offer French I, but only 13 percent complete it; and we offer geography, but only 16 percent complete it. Calculus is available in schools enrolling about 60 percent of all students, but only 6 percent of all students complete it.

—Twenty-five percent of the credits earned by general track high school students are in physical and health education, work experience outside the school, remedial English and mathematics, and personal service and development courses, such as training for adulthood and marriage.

Findings Regarding Expectations

We define expectations in terms of the level of knowledge, abilities, and skills school and college graduates should possess. They also refer to the time, hard work, behavior, self-discipline, and motivation that are essential for high student achievement. Such expectations are expressed to students in several different ways:

—by grades, which reflect the degree to which students demonstrate their mastery of subject matter;
—through high school and college graduation requirements, which tell students which subjects are most important;
—by the presence or absence of rigorous examinations requiring students to demonstrate their mastery of content and skill before receiving a diploma or a degree;
—by college admissions requirements, which reinforce high school standards; and
—by the difficulty of the subject matter students confront in their texts and assigned readings.

Our analyses in each of these areas indicate notable deficiencies:

—The amount of homework for high school seniors has decreased (two-thirds report less than 1 hour a night) and grades have risen as average student achievement has been declining.

—In many other industrialized nations, courses in mathematics (other than arithmetic or general mathematics), biology, chemistry, physics, and geography start in grade 6 and are required of *all* students. The time spent on these subjects, based on class hours, is about three times that spent by even the most science-oriented U.S. students, i.e., those who select 4 years of science and mathematics in secondary school.

—A 1980 State-by-State survey of high school diploma requirements reveals that only eight States require high schools to offer foreign language instruction, but none requires students to take the courses. Thirty-five States require only 1 year of mathematics, and 36 require only 1 year of science for a diploma.

—In 13 States, 50 percent or more of the units required for high school graduation may be electives chosen by the student. Given this freedom to choose the substance of half or more of their education, many students opt for less demanding personal service courses, such as bachelor living.

—"Minimum competency" examinations (now required in 37 States) fall short of what is needed, as the "minimum" tends to become the "maximum," thus lowering educational standards for all.

—One-fifth of all 4-year public colleges in the United States must accept every high school graduate within the State regardless of program followed or grades, thereby serving notice to high school students that they can expect to attend college even if they do not follow a demanding course of study in high school or perform well.

—About 23 percent of our more selective colleges and universities reported that their general level of selectivity declined during the 1970s, and 29 percent reported reducing the number of specific high school courses required for admission (usually by dropping foreign language requirements, which are now specified as a condition for admission by only one-fifth of our institutions of higher education).

—Too few experienced teachers and scholars are involved in writing textbooks. During the past decade or so a large number of texts have been "written down" by their publishers to ever-lower reading levels in response to perceived market demands.

—A recent study by Education Products Information Exchange revealed that a majority of students were able to master 80 percent of the material in some of their subject-matter texts before they had even opened the books. Many books do not challenge the students to whom they are assigned.

—Expenditures for textbooks and other instructional materials have declined by 50 percent over the past 17 years. While some recommend a level of spending on texts of between 5 and 10 percent of the operating costs of schools, the budgets for basal texts and related materials have been dropping during the past decade and a half to only 0.7 percent today.

Findings Regarding Time

Evidence presented to the Commission demonstrates three disturbing facts about the use that American schools and students make of time: (1) compared to other nations, American students spend much less time on school work; (2) time spent in the classroom and on homework is often used ineffectively; and (3) schools are not doing enough to help students develop either the study skills required to use time well or the willingness to spend more time on school work.

—In England and other industrialized countries, it is not unusual for academic high school students to spend 8 hours a day at school, 220 days per year. In the United States, by contrast, the typical school day lasts 6 hours and the school year is 180 days.

—In many schools, the time spent learning how to cook and drive counts as much toward a high school diploma as the time spent studying mathematics, English, chemistry, U.S. history, or biology.

—A study of the school week in the United States found that some schools provided students only 17 hours of academic instruction during the week, and the average school provided about 22.

—A California study of individual classrooms found that because of poor management of classroom time, some elementary students received only one-fifth of the instruction others received in reading comprehension.

—In most schools, the teaching of study skills is haphazard and unplanned. Consequently, many students complete high school and enter college without disciplined and systematic study habits.

Findings Regarding Teaching

The Commission found that not enough of the academically able students are being attracted to teaching; that teacher preparation programs need substantial improvement; that the professional working life of teachers is on the whole unacceptable; and that a serious shortage of teachers exists in key fields.

—Too many teachers are being drawn from the bottom quarter of graduating high school and college students.

—The teacher preparation curriculum is weighted heavily with courses in "educational methods" at the expense of courses in subjects to be taught. A survey of 1,350 institutions training teachers indicated that 41 percent of the time of elementary school teacher candidates is spent in education courses, which reduces the amount of time available for subject matter courses.

—The average salary after 12 years of teaching is only $17,000 per year, and many teachers are required to supplement their income with part-time and summer employment. In addition, individual teachers have little influence in such critical professional decisions as, for example, textbook selection.

—Despite widespread publicity about an overpopulation of teachers, severe shortages of certain kinds of teachers exist: in the fields of mathematics, science, and foreign languages; and among specialists in education for gifted and talented, language minority, and handicapped students.

"... The professional working life of teachers is on the whole unacceptable...."

—The shortage of teachers in mathematics and science is particularly severe. A 1981 survey of 45 States revealed shortages of mathematics teachers in 43 States, critical shortages of earth sciences teachers in 33 States, and of physics teachers everywhere.
—Half of the newly employed mathematics, science, and English teachers are not qualified to teach these subjects; fewer than one-third of U.S. high schools offer physics taught by qualified teachers.

Recommendations

In light of the urgent need for improvement, both immediate and long term, this Commission has agreed on a set of recommendations that the American people can begin to act on now, that can be implemented over the next several years, and that promise lasting reform. The topics are familiar; there is little mystery about what we believe must be done. Many schools, districts, and States are already giving serious and constructive attention to these matters, even though their plans may differ from our recommendations in some details.

We wish to note that we refer to public, private, and parochial schools and colleges alike. All are valuable national resources. Examples of actions similar to those recommended below can be found in each of them.

We must emphasize that the variety of student aspirations, abilities, and preparation requires that appropriate content be available to satisfy diverse needs. Attention must be directed to both the nature of the content available and to the needs of particular learners. The most gifted students, for example, may need a curriculum enriched and accelerated beyond even the needs of other students of high ability. Similarly, educationally disadvantaged students may require special curriculum materials, smaller classes, or individual tutoring to help them master the material presented. Nevertheless, there remains a common expectation: We must demand the best effort and performance from all students, whether they are gifted or less able, affluent or disadvantaged, whether destined for college, the farm, or industry.

Our recommendations are based on the beliefs that everyone can learn, that everyone is born with an *urge* to learn which can be nurtured, that a solid high school education is within the reach of virtually all, and that life-long learning will equip people with the skills required for new careers and for citizenship.

A: Content

We recommend *that State and local high school graduation requirements be strengthened and that,* at a minimum, all *students seeking a diploma be required to lay the foundations in the Five New Basics by taking the following curriculum during their 4 years of high school: (a) 4 years of English; (b) 3 years of mathematics; (c) 3 years of science; (d) 3 years of social studies; and (e) one-half year of computer science. For the college-bound, 2 years of foreign language in high school are strongly recommended in addition to those taken earlier.*

Whatever the student's educational or work objectives, knowledge of the New Basics is the foundation of success for the after-school years and, therefore, forms the core of the modern curriculum. A high level of shared education in these Basics, together with work in the fine and performing arts and foreign languages, constitutes the mind and spirit of our culture. The following Implementing Recommendations are intended as illustrative descriptions. They are included here to clarify what we mean by the essentials of a strong curriculum.

Implementing Recommendations

1. The teaching of *English* in high school should equip graduates to: (a) comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and use what they read; (b) write well-organized, effective papers; (c) listen effectively and discuss ideas intelligently; and (d) know our literary heritage and how it enhances imagination and ethical understanding, and how it relates to the customs, ideas, and values of today's life and culture.
2. The teaching of *mathematics* in high school should equip graduates to: (a) understand geometric and algebraic concepts; (b) understand elementary probability and statistics; (c) apply mathematics in everyday situations; and (d) estimate, approximate, measure, and test the accuracy of their calculations. In addition to the traditional sequence of studies available for college-bound students, new, equally demanding mathematics curricula need to be developed for those who do not plan to continue their formal education immediately.
3. The teaching of *science* in high school should provide graduates with an introduction to: (a) the concepts, laws, and processes of the physical and biological sciences; (b) the methods of scientific inquiry and reasoning; (c) the application of scientific knowledge to everyday life; and (d) the social and environmental implications of scientific and technological development. Science courses must be revised and updated for both the college-bound and those not intending to go to college. An example of such work is the American Chemical Society's "Chemistry in the Community" program.
4. The teaching of *social studies* in high school should be designed to: (a) enable students to fix their places and possibilities within the larger social and cultural structure; (b) understand the broad sweep of both ancient and contemporary ideas that have shaped our world; and (c) understand the fundamentals of how our economic system works and how our political system functions; and (d) grasp the difference between free and repressive societies. An understanding of each of these areas is requisite to the informed and committed exercise of citizenship in our free society.
5. The teaching of *computer science* in high school should equip graduates to: (a) understand the computer as an information, computation, and communication device; (b) use the computer in the study of the other Basics and for personal and work-related purposes; and (c) understand the world of computers, electronics, and related technologies.

In addition to the New Basics, other important curriculum matters must be addressed.

6. Achieving proficiency in a *foreign language* ordinarily requires from 4 to 6 years of study and should, therefore, be started in the elementary grades. We believe it is desirable that students achieve such proficiency because study of a foreign language introduces students to non-English-speaking cultures, heightens awareness and comprehension of one's native tongue, and serves the Nation's needs in commerce, diplomacy, defense, and education.
7. The high school curriculum should also provide students with programs requiring rigorous effort in subjects that advance students' personal, educational, and occupational goals, such as the fine and performing arts and vocational education. These areas complement the New Basics, and they should demand the same level of performance as the Basics.
8. The curriculum in the crucial eight grades leading to the high school years should be specifically designed to provide a sound base for study in those and later years in such areas as English language development and writing, computational and problem solving skills, science, social studies, foreign language, and the arts. These years should foster an enthusiasm for learning and the development of the individual's gifts and talents.

—We encourage the continuation of efforts by groups such as the American Chemical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Modern Language Association, and the National Councils of Teachers of English and Teachers of Mathematics, to revise, update, improve, and make available new and more diverse curricular materials. We applaud the consortia of educators and scientific, industrial, and scholarly societies that cooperate to improve the school curriculum.

B: Standards and Expectations

We recommend *that schools, colleges, and universities adopt more rigorous and measurable standards, and higher expectations, for academic performance and student conduct, and that 4-year colleges and universities raise their requirements for admission. This will help students do their best educationally with challenging materials in an environment that supports learning and authentic accomplishment.*

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Implementing Recommendations

1. Grades should be indicators of academic achievement so they can be relied on as evidence of a student's readiness for further study.
2. Four-year colleges and universities should raise their admissions requirements and advise all potential applicants of the standards for admission in terms of specific courses required, performance in these areas, and levels of achievement on standardized achievement tests in each of the five Basics and, where applicable, foreign languages.
3. Standardized tests of achievement (not to be confused with aptitude tests) should be administered at major transition points from one level of schooling to another and particularly from high school to college or work. The purposes of these tests would be to: (a) certify the student's credentials; (b) identify the need for remedial intervention; and (c) identify the opportunity for advanced or accelerated work. The tests should be administered as part of a nationwide (but not Federal) system of State and local standardized tests. This system should include other diagnostic procedures that assist teachers and students to evaluate student progress.
4. Textbooks and other tools of learning and teaching should be upgraded and updated to assure more rigorous content. We call upon university scientists, scholars, and members of professional societies, in collaboration with master teachers, to help in this task, as they did in the post-Sputnik era. They should assist willing publishers in developing the projects or publish their own alternatives where there are persistent inadequacies.
5. In considering textbooks for adoption, States and school districts should: (a) evaluate texts and other materials on their ability to present rigorous and challenging material clearly; and (b) require publishers to furnish evaluation data on the material's effectiveness.
6. Because no textbook in any subject can be geared to the needs of all students, funds should be made available to support text development in "thin-market" areas, such as those for disadvantaged students, the learning disabled, and the gifted and talented.
7. To assure quality, all publishers should furnish evidence of the quality and appropriateness of textbooks, based on results from field trials and credible evaluations. In view of the enormous numbers and varieties of texts available, more widespread consumer information services for purchasers are badly needed.
8. New instructional materials should reflect the most current applications of technology in appropriate curriculum areas, the best scholarship in each discipline, and research in learning and teaching.

C: Time

We recommend *that significantly more time be devoted to learning the New Basics. This will require more effective use of the existing school day, a longer school day, or a lengthened school year.*

Implementing Recommendations

1. Students in high schools should be assigned far more homework than is now the case.
2. Instruction in effective study and work skills, which are essential if school and independent time is to be used efficiently, should be introduced in the early grades and continued throughout the student's schooling.
3. School districts and state legislatures should strongly consider 7-hour school days, as well as a 200- to 220-day school year.
4. The time available for learning should be expanded through better classroom management and organization of the school day. If necessary, additional time should be found to meet the special needs of slow learners, the gifted, and others who need more instructional diversity than can be accommodated during a conventional school day or school year.
5. The burden on teachers for maintaining discipline should be reduced through the development of firm and fair codes of student conduct that are enforced consistently, and by considering alternative classrooms, programs, and schools to meet the needs of continually disruptive students.
6. Attendance policies with clear incentives and sanctions should be used to reduce the amount of time lost through students absenteeism and tardiness.
7. Administrative burdens on the teacher and related intrusions into the school day should be reduced to add time for teaching and learning.
8. Placement and grouping of students, as well as promotion and graduation policies, should be guided by the academic progress of students and their instructional needs, rather than by rigid adherence to age.

D: Teaching

This recommendation *consists of seven parts. Each is intended to improve the preparation of teachers or to make teaching a more rewarding and respected profession. Each of the seven stands on its own and should not be considered solely as an implementing recommendation.*

1. Persons preparing to teach should be required to meet high educational standards, to demonstrate an aptitude for teaching, and to demonstrate competence in an academic discipline. Colleges and universities offering teacher preparation programs should be judged by how well their graduates meet these criteria.
2. Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based. Salary, promotion, tenure, and retention decisions should be tied to an effective evaluation system that includes peer review so that superior teachers can be rewarded, average ones encouraged, and poor ones either improved or terminated.
3. School boards should adopt an 11-month contract for teachers. This would ensure time for curriculum and professional development, programs for students with special needs, and a more adequate level of teacher compensation.
4. School boards, administrators, and teachers should cooperate to develop career ladders for teachers that distinguish among the beginning instructor, the experienced teacher, and the master teacher.
5. Substantial nonschool personnel resources should be employed to help solve the immediate problem of the shortage of mathematics and science teachers. Qualified individuals including recent graduates with mathematics and science degrees, graduate students, and industrial and retired scientists could, with appropriate preparation, immediately begin teaching in these fields. A number of our leading science centers have the capacity to begin educating and retraining teachers immediately. Other areas of critical teacher need, such as English, must also be addressed.
6. Incentives, such as grants and loans, should be made available to attract outstanding students to the teaching profession, particularly in those areas of critical shortage.
7. Master teachers should be involved in designing teacher preparation programs and in supervising teachers during their probationary years.

E: Leadership and Fiscal Support

We recommend *that citizens across the Nation hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms, and that citizens provide the fiscal support and stability required to bring about the reforms we propose.*

Implementing Recommendations

1. Principals and superintendents must play a crucial leadership role in developing school and community support for the reforms we propose, and school boards must provide them with the professional development and other support required to carry out their leadership role effectively. The commission stresses the distinction between leadership skills involving persuasion, setting goals and developing community consensus behind them, and managerial and supervisory skills. Although the latter are necessary, we believe that school boards must consciously develop leadership skills at the school and district levels if the re-

"It is the America of all of us that is at risk; it is to each of us that this imperative is addressed."

forms we propose are to be achieved.

2. State and local officials, including school board members, governors, and legislators, have *the primary responsibility* for financing and governing the schools, and should incorporate the reforms we propose in their educational policies and fiscal planning.
3. The federal government, in cooperation with states and localities, should help meet the needs of key groups of students such as the gifted and talented, the socioeconomically disadvantaged, minority and language minority students, and the handicapped. In combination these groups include both national resources and the Nation's youth who are most at risk.
4. In addition, we believe the federal government's role includes several functions of national consequence that States and localities alone are unlikely to be able to meet: protecting constitutional and civil rights for students and school personnel; collecting data, statistics, and information about education generally; supporting curriculum improvement and research on teaching, learning, and the management of schools suporting teacher training in areas of critical shortage or key national needs; and providing student financial assistance and research and graduate training. We believe the assistance of the federal government should be provided with a minimum of administrative burden and intrusiveness.
5. The federal government has *the primary responsibility* to identify the national interest in education. It should also help fund and support efforts to protect and promote that interest. It must provide the national leadership to ensure that the Nation's public and private resources are marshaled to address the issues discussed in this report.
6. This commission calls upon educators; parents, and public officials at all levels to assist in bringing about the educational reform proposed in this report. We also call upon citizens to provide the financial support necessary to accomplish these purposes. Excellence costs. But in the long run mediocrity costs far more.

America Can Do It

Despite the obstacles and difficulties that inhibit the pursuit of superior educational attainment, we are confident, with history as our guide, that we can meet our goal. The American educational system has responded to previous challenges with remarkable success. In the 19th century our land-grant colleges and universities provided the research and training that developed our Nation's natural resources and the rich agricultural bounty of the American farm. From the late 1800s through mid-20th century, American schools provided the educated workforce needed to seal the success of the Industrial Revolution and to provide the margin of victory in two world wars. In the early part of this century and continuing to this very day, our schools have absorbed vast waves of immigrants and educated them and their children to productive citizenship. Similarly, the Nation's black colleges have provided opportunity and undergraduate education to the vast majority of college-educated black Americans.

More recently, our institutions of higher education have provided the scientists and skilled technicians who helped us transcend the boundaries of our planet. In the last 30 years, the schools have been a major vehicle for expanded social opportunity, and now graduate 75 percent of our young people from high school. Indeed, the proportion of Americans of college age enrolled in higher education is nearly twice that of Japan and far exceeds other nations such as France, West Germany, and the Soviet Union. Moreover, when international comparisons were last made a decade ago, the top 9 percent of American students compared favorably in achievement with their peers in other countries.

In addition, many large urban areas in recent years report that average student achievement in elementary schools is improving. More and more schools are also offering advanced placement programs and programs for gifted and talented students, and more and more students are enrolling in them.

We are the inheritors of a past that gives us every reason to believe that we will succeed.

A Word to Parents and Students

The task of assuring the success of our recommendations does not fall to the schools and colleges alone. Obviously, faculty members and administrators, along with policymakers and the mass media, will play a crucial role in the reform of the educational system. But even more important is the role of parents and students, and to them we speak directly.

To Parents

You know that you cannot confidently launch your children into today's world unless they are of strong character and well-educated in the use of language, science, and mathematics. They must possess a deep respect for intelligence, achievement, and learning, and the skills needed to use them; for setting goals; and for disciplined work. That respect must be accompanied by an intolerance for the shoddy and second-rate masquerading as "good enough."

You have the right to demand for your children the best our schools and colleges can provide. Your vigilance and your refusal to be satisfied with less than the best are the imperative first step. But your right to a proper education for your children carries a double responsibility. As surely as you are your child's first and most influential teacher, your child's ideas about education and its significance begin with you. You must be a *living* example of what you expect your children to honor and to emulate. Moreover, you bear a responsibility to participate actively in your child's education. You should encourage more diligent study and discourage satisfaction with mediocrity and the attitude that says "let it slide"; monitor your child's study; encourage good study habits; encourage your child to take more demanding rather than less demanding courses; nurture your child's curiosity, creativity, and confidence; and be an active participant in the work of the schools. Above all, exhibit a commitment to continued learning in your own life. Finally, help your children understand that excellence in education cannot be achieved without intellectual and moral integrity coupled with hard work and commitment. Children will look to their parents and teachers as models of such virtues.

To Students

You forfeit your chance for life at its fullest when you withhold your best effort in learning. When you give only the minimum to learning, you receive only the minimum in return. Even with your parents' best example and your teachers' best efforts, in the end it is *your* work that determines how much and how well you learn. When you work to your full capacity, you can hope to attain the knowledge and skills that will enable you to create your future and control your destiny. If you do not, you will have your future thrust upon you by others. Take hold of your life, apply your gifts and talents, work with dedication and self-discipline. Have high expectations for yourself and convert every challenge into an opportunity.

A Final Word

This is not the first or only commission on education, and some of our findings are surely not new, but old business that now at last must be done. For no one can doubt that the United States is under challenge from many quarters.

Children born today can expect to graduate from high school in the year 2000. We dedicate our report not only to these children, but also to those now in school and others to come. We firmly believe that a movement of America's schools in the direction called for by our recommendations will prepare these children for far more effective lives in a far stronger America.

Our final word, perhaps better characterized as a plea, is that all segments of our population give attention to the implementation of our recommendations. Our present plight did not appear overnight, and the responsibility for our current situation is widespread. Reform of our educational system will take time and unwavering commitment. It will require equally widespread, energetic, and dedicated action. For example, we call upon the National Academy of Sciences, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts, and other scholarly, scientific, and learned societies for their help in this effort. Help should come from students themselves; from parents, teachers, and school boards; from colleges and universities; from local, state, and federal officials; from teachers and administrators' organizations; from industrial and labor councils; and from other groups with interest in and responsibility for educational reform.

It is their America, and the America of all of us, that is at risk; it is to each of us that this imperative is addressed. It is by our willingness to take up the challenge, and our resolve to see it through, that America's place in the world will be either secured or forfeited. Americans have succeeded before and so we shall again.